

Customer in the Stacks

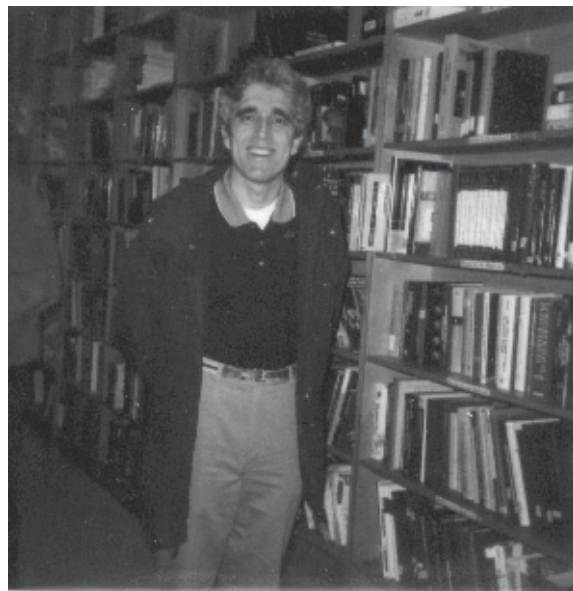
I had the great luck of finding customer *Aziz Inan* in the math section. Not only is he an avid customer of ours, but he has a way of talking about books that explains the “bibliolatry” in all of us book fiends.

What sort of books do you shop for? Usually electrical engineering. I also look for mathematics, physics, biography and science history titles. Powell’s Tech is the only bookstore that I know which offers such a wide variety of old and new technical books at the same time.

How long have you been a customer of ours? I would probably say seven to eight years. I wish I remembered the day when I first came to Powell’s and why.

Who are your favorite authors? One of them is Isaac Asimov. The three that I would recommend are **Asimov’s Biographical Encyclopedia of Science & Technology, 2nd revised edition**; **Asimov’s Chronology of Science & Discovery**, and **Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts**. I also like Paul J. Nahin’s **Oliver Heaviside: Sage in Solitude**.

You buy lots of books from us. Is storage space a problem? It is a major problem. I store my books in my office as well as at home. Right now, I don’t have any shelf space available in either one of these places. So, first, I have to decide which books I don’t use and give up on those books to open up some space. Once I do that, then I can buy more books. Over the years, I realized that I have to seriously keep in mind the space issue and think twice before I buy another book for my collection. However, no matter how hard I try to resist buying new books, I know for sure that I will keep finding more interesting books over at Powell’s Tech. This is what makes this bookstore so special. One day, you go there and all of a sudden, here is this fifty year-old used book sitting on the shelf that you had no idea that it even existed. The author of this book may not even be alive. However, when you open up the pages of the book, in a matter of seconds, the author becomes alive and starts talking to you! And as long as you keep shuffling through the pages, the conversation goes on. After the conversation is over, you now have to decide whether you want to buy this book or not. It is very likely that this book is out of



print and if you don’t buy it, someone else will. If that happens, you may never have a chance to see this book again; you may never have a chance to talk to its author again! So, how can you resist to buy such a treasure? Especially if you are someone like myself who believes that every book is a treasure.

If you could meet any author, dead or alive, who would it be? There are many of them. James Maxwell, Michael Faraday, Gustav Kirchhoff, Johann Gauss, Joseph Fourier, John Tyndall, Oliver Heaviside, John H. Poynting, Paul Dirac, Frederick Terman, Hugh Skilling—the list goes on.

What projects are you currently working on? I am currently teaching. I am also working on a technical research article that I have to complete and send in to a conference at the end of this month. I am sure I will have to give up some of my sleep in the next week or two to get it done.

Sometimes you come in the store with your sons. What do they think of Fup, our grouchy store cat? They always love to see Fup. We try to go and find where Fup is hiding and say hello to her. If Fup is asleep, about to go to sleep, or just woke up, they usually don’t bother her. One day, I showed Fup’s business card to Baris, and he wondered about Fup’s job position in the store. I told him that Fup’s responsibility is to help the mice customers!